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➤BOOK ❖ NOTICES.◀

[Any publication noticed in these pages may be obtained of the AMERICAN PUBLICATION SOCIETY OF HEBREW, Morgan Park, Ill.]

EDERSHEIM'S MESSIANIC PROPHECY AND HISTORY.*

Dr. Edersheim has given us a book which treats a subject at once difficult and important. His treatment is necessarily a condensed one; it covers a long period and, for the most part, discusses principles. The standpoint of the writer is the conservative one. His work is in many respects eminently satisfactory. Touching the relation of Christianity to the Messianic idea in the Old Testament, he says: "Christianity in its origin appealed to a great Messianic expectancy, the source and spring of which must be sought not in the post-exilic period, but is found in the Old Testament itself. The whole Old Testament is prophetic. Its special predictions form only a part, although an organic part of the prophetic Scriptures; and all prophecy points to the Kingdom of God and to the Messiah as its King. The narrow boundaries of Judah and Israel were to be enlarged so as to embrace all men, and one King would reign in righteousness over a ransomed world that would offer to Him its homage of praise and service. All that had marred the moral harmony of earth would be removed; the universal Fatherhood of God would become the birthright of redeemed, pardoned, regenerated humanity; and all this blessing would center in, and flow from, the Person of the Messiah." Our author accepts the following principles: that prophecy always starts from the times of the prophet; that the fulfillment is wider than either hearers or speakers had perceived; that it had always a meaning and a lesson to those who heard it; that the prophets were not merely foretellers of future events, but the reprovers, reformers and instructors of their times. In explaining this twofold activity he says: "When the prophet foretells, he presents the future in the light of the present: and when he admonishes or reproves, he presents the present in the light of that future which he sees to be surely coming."

Notwithstanding the explanation given in the preface, we fail to see that the order of the book is a logical one. He takes up in one lecture, for example, (1) the Kingdom of God the leading idea in the Old Testament; (2) the form in which prophecy was presented to successive generations; (3) the relation between prophecy and fulfillment; (4) the character of prophetism; (5) the development of heathenism by the side of Israel. Another lecture discusses (1) some principles in regard to prophecy and fulfillment; (2) certain special prophecies; (3) the biblical terms applied to prophets; (4) the functions of the "Sons of the prophets"; (5) some prophecies in the New Testament.

* PROPHECY AND HISTORY IN RELATION TO THE MESSIAH; the Warburton Lectures for 1880-1884, with two appendices on the arrangement, analysis, and recent criticism of the Pentateuch, by Alfred Edersheim, M. A., Oxon., D. D., Ph. D. New York: A. D. F. Randolph & Co., 1885. Pp. xxi., 389. Price, \$2.50.

The same topic comes up repeatedly in different lectures, being discussed partly in one place and partly in another. As an apology for the many repetitions it is said that the lectures extended over four years. But why did not the author revise his lectures and thus make them more valuable?

The old view as to the etymology of the word *nabhi* (prophet) is adopted, viz., that the prophet was so filled with Divine Inspiration that it "bubbles up" out of his speech. That view, however, which makes the word mean "speaker," is certainly preferable, and is better in accordance with a true idea of prophecy.

The writer appreciates the relation sustained by questions of "criticism" to the subject under discussion. He gives two entire lectures, and two appendices to the composition and date of the Pentateuch.

The last three lectures, in which the Messianic idea as indicated in the Apocrypha, the different movements of national life in Palestine in their bearing on the Messianic idea, the teachings of the Pseudepigraphic writings concerning the Messiah, and the last stages of Messianic prophecy are treated, are especially interesting and valuable.

Why will publishers issue a book without a single index?

USE AND ABUSE OF ASSYRIOLOGY.*

This volume gives us in printed form the annual discourse delivered by Dr. Brown before the students and faculty of Union Theological Seminary, September 18, 1884. Assyriology has been more or less misused in defending the Old Testament: (1) There has been *overhaste in its employment*. Scholars have, in many cases, been too eager to announce what seemed to be discoveries; writers have accepted and used these announcements before they have been shown to be true. Theories and suggestions have been allowed too much influence. (2) There has been, on the other hand, a disposition to *refuse to accept the clear facts* brought to light by this study. An Assyrian statement is discovered which does not accord as fully as one would have it, with a corresponding biblical statement. For the sake of harmonizing the two statements, a meaning is forced upon the former which is by no manner of means warranted. It is wrong to "hail with eagerness well-attested historical documents when they say what you want them to say, but to discredit them with all your might when their utterances are troublesome to you." Dr. Brown speaks words deeply significant when he says "It is a pity to be afraid of facts." (3) It is also an abuse of Assyriology to *ignore the new problems* which it raises. Without a doubt it smooths over many old difficulties, but it gives rise to many new ones. These must be recognized by the Bible-student; they must be discussed from an unprejudiced standpoint. The discoveries of Assyriology, for example, must lead to a renewed discussion of the early narratives in Genesis. Were these narratives revealed directly to their human author? Were they handed down from antiquity under miraculous supervision? Do they belong to the common stock of popular Semitic tradition, cleansed

* ASSYRIOLOGY, ITS USE AND ABUSE IN OLD TESTAMENT STUDY; by Francis Brown, Associate Professor of Biblical Philology in the Union Theological Seminary, New York. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1885. Pp. 96. Price, \$1.00.